

**EXETER-WEST GREENWICH    December 6, 2005**

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## **MINUTES**

**The Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School Committee held a meeting on this date at 6:30 p.m. in the Jr. - Sr. High School Library. Members present were Teri Cicero, Vice Chairperson; Gregory Coutcher, Clerk; Bill Clay, Paul McFadden, and Frank Maher. Susan DeSack, Chairperson; arrived at 7:01 p.m. Member William Munroe was absent. Superintendent Roy M. Seitsinger, Jr.; and Director of Special Services Maureen DeCrescenzo were present. Director of Curriculum Nancy I. Daley; and Director of Administration Robert V. Ross; arrived at 7:20 p.m. Student Representative Emily DeCristofano arrived at 7:20 p.m. and left at 7:50 p.m.**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION – Vice Chair Cicero moved to go into Executive Session at 6:30 p.m. in accordance with RIGL 42-46-5(b)(8) for the purpose of discussion regarding Student Hearings. Seconded by Member Clay. Voted 5 - 0.**

**Meeting moved to Executive Session at 6:30 p.m.**

**Meeting reconvened to Open Session at 7:20 p.m.**

**No votes were taken during Executive Session.**

**ORDER – Chair DeSack called the meeting to order at 7:20 p.m.**

**The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all and Vice Chair Cicero read the District Mission Statement.**

**OPEN FORUM – None**

**PRESENTATION – Student Member Report – Emily DeCristofano gave a brief overview of varied student activities.**

**ROUTINE ITEMS – CONSENT AGENDA – Superintendent Seitsinger gave an overview of the Consent Agenda.**

**Member McFadden requested agenda item A. Minutes – Regular Minutes of November 22, 2005 be pulled from the consent agenda.**

**Member Clay requested agenda item A. Minutes – Executive Session Minutes of November 22, 2005 be pulled; and moved to seal the Executive Session Minutes of November 22, 2005. Seconded by Clerk Coutcher. Voted 5 – 0 – 1. Member McFadden abstained.**

**Clerk Coutcher requested agenda item D. Energy Fixed Price Agreement be pulled from the consent agenda.**

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**Member Clay moved to accept the consent agenda with items A. Minutes – Regular Minutes of November 22, 2005 and D. Energy Fixed Price Agreement pulled. Seconded by Vice Chair Cicero. Voted 6 – 0.**

**The following items were approved:**

**B. Personnel Items**

**1. Appointments – (As Recommended by the Superintendent)**

**a. Josh Bednarczyk as Winter Sports Supervisor, Stipend \$2,340.00, effective December 2005 – for the 2005-2006 season.**

**b. Catherine Morgan as 1.0 FTE Student Information System Technician, Grade 4, Step 10, Salary \$36,768.00, effective on or about December 7, 2005.**

**2. Leaves of Absence**

**3. Resignations**

**4. Grievances**

**C. Bills – In the amount of \$ 96,762.74**

**End of Consent Agenda**

**Superintendent Seitsinger read the list of correspondence.**

**E. Correspondence – (1) Formal Letter to Dr. Seitsinger from Cheryl Chorney Regarding the DFM Time Change Proposal, (2) Budget by Fund, (3) Budget by Location and Program, (4) November 25, 2005 Coventry Courier Article Regarding Coventry and EWG Honored as RI's Leading High Schools, (4) EWG School Committee, Exeter Town Council, and W. Greenwich Town Council Joint Meeting Rescheduled to December 13, 2005 Invitation**

**Chair DeSack referenced Correspondence (4) and reported the schedule change was due to a West Greenwich Town Council request.**

**F. Monthly Sub-Committee Report – None**

**NEW BUSINESS-Legal Ruling Regarding Sanctioned Student Travel – Superintendent Seitsinger reported he spoke with Attorney Nick Gorham regarding this matter; Attorney Gorham was unable to provide documentation in time for tonight's meeting, and the Superintendent will bring the documentation forward at the next School**

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**Committee meeting on January 10, 2006. Superintendent Seitsinger informed members that upon speaking with Attorney Gorham his**

findings were, if the School Committee sanctions student travel, the district does hold responsibility and if the School Committee does not sanction student travel, the district still assumes some responsibility. Superintendent Seitsinger suggested carrying this item over as Unfinished Business to the next School Committee meeting on January 10, 2006.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS- 8th Grade Quebec Trip Proposal –** Superintendent Seitsinger explained this item was carried over from the last School Committee meeting and asked representatives from the Junior High School to step forward to speak to this matter.

Member Clay asked if all students were eligible to attend this trip.

Jr. High School foreign language teacher Benjamin Blackett confirmed all students in good academic standing are eligible to attend. Principal Thompson added - financial hardship is not a factor in eligibility to attend.

Members and Administration had a discussion regarding previous meeting dialogue pertaining to sanctioning student travel out of the country and School Committee liability for such travel as well as other student events – whether or not sanctioned by School Committee. Member McFadden suggested postponing voting on this matter until documentation is received from Attorney Gorham relevant to agenda item Legal Ruling Regarding Sanctioned Student

**Travel in order to allow members to include protective language in the motion. Vice Chair Cicero expressed her support for this trip. Member Clay expressed his feelings that this is a worthwhile trip and his desire to approve the trip proposal tonight.**

**Vice Chair Cicero moved to sanction the 8th Grade Quebec Trip. Member Clay seconded. Voted 4 – 1 – 1. Member Maher voted no. Member McFadden abstained.**

**Motion carried.**

**EWG Sports 4 Kids – Track Project – Parent Volunteer Rob Correia spoke on behalf of EWG Sports 4 Kids and reported that since the last School Committee meeting EWG Kids 4 Sports has had assistance from Attorney Gorham to overcome a roadblock with regards to the DEM grant the group is seeking. He reported Attorney Gorham has spoken with DEM regarding this matter and DEM has requested a diagram be provided to them illustrating a community right away to the track. DEM is requiring EWG School Committee to grant a right away to the town of West Greenwich in order to assure community access to the track. They also are requesting a statement of relationship between EWG Sports 4 Kids and EWG School Committee. DEM emphasized to Attorney Gorham that it would be in everyone's' best interest to obtain endorsement in writing from the town of Exeter as well. Mr. Correia confirmed contact was made with**

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**Exeter Town Council and they have agreed to endorse this effort. Mr. Correia emphasized the need for the School Committee to deed the recreational easement to the town of West Greenwich as soon as possible.**

**School Committee members, Superintendent Seitsinger, and EWG Sports 4 Kids members expressed their thoughts and views and had a lengthy discussion regarding numerous related subject matters such as timelines, night time events under the lights which will generate revenue as well as incur electricity expenses, responsibility for payment of electricity bills, the need to set conditions that community access does not impede on school activities when establishing the recreational easement, the need to assure School Committee sustains control of the property, EWG Sports 4 Kids intent to apply for additional grant monies and to continue to fundraise - projecting \$20,000 – \$25,000 annually which will be used to maintain the track and cover expenses of the track, and the need to provide DEM with the information they are requesting in order to move forward.**

**Vice Chair Cicero moved to accept the agreement brought forward by EWG Sports 4 Kids – Track Project. Seconded by Member Maher.**

**Members Clay and McFadden expressed, although they support this project, their concerns regarding surrendering any rights of the**

property to EWG Sports 4 Kids and Member McFadden questioned EWG Sports 4 Kids' future obligation to come before the School Committee prior to making track related judgments. Member McFadden said he would rather not take any action at this point, as he would like Attorney Gorham to review this matter and bring legal documentation detailing the easement for School Committee review prior to taking action.

Members agreed there is an immediate need to have the public right away and working agreement in place in order to go forward; however, Chair DeSack said the committee does not need to move to accept at this point in time.

Vice Chair Cicero withdrew her motion in order to allow Attorney Gorham to review this matter first.

Consensus was Superintendent Seitsinger will make contact with the town of West Greenwich concerning this matter, the committee is not ready to vote at this time - as members need to review legal documents before voting, and to assemble and bring forward the necessary documentation by the January 10, 2006 School Committee meeting in order to ensure mailing the grant application before the January 20, 2006 deadline.

Student Member Emily DeCristofano left the meeting at this time.  
(7:50 p.m.)



**Further discussion continued relating to members' concerns of public access to the school building and liability for potential injuries that may take place on the property.**

**Liability Insurance & Building Protection Insurance – Chair DeSack referred to an enclosure provided to members and explained the committee had asked Director of Administration Robert Ross to provide this information regarding insurance costs. She explained at the previous meeting, members had discussed whether to direct Mr. Ross to increase insurance coverage.**

**Member McFadden, Administrators, and some members debated whether or not to increase insurance coverage beginning on January 1, 2006 which will incur a \$5,775 additional payment rather than wait until July 1, 2006 – (next year's budget). Member McFadden asked members to consider increasing insurance coverage for the Jr. - Sr. High School as of January 1st for the remainder of this year, as he feels \$5,775 is a small amount to ensure protection of the Jr. - Sr. High School building.**

**Members and Mr. Ross had a discussion relating to where the \$5,775**

will come from, a projected budget surplus of \$40,000, and the need to maintain a cash flow.

Member McFadden moved to, at this time, appropriate \$5,775 for the intent to increase insurance coverage of the Jr. – Sr. High School for January 1 and July 1 of this fiscal year. Chair DeSack seconded.

Discussion: Mr. Ross, Superintendent Seitsinger, and members discussed outstanding invoices not reflected in the current budget, unexpected expenses, and the reserve fund. Superintendent Seitsinger expressed his view that the district needs to be more cautious this year than ever before about spending. Mr. Ross suggested he will be able to provide the first projection for the Jan 10th meeting and show probable funds to cover \$5,775 insurance increase cost; however, his concern is there are hard decision to be made the whole year through and he advised member to learn to say no. Member McFadden argued property insurance is not a frivolous expense. Members and Administrators further discussed the cash reserve, state aid, and the 2004 – 2005 money held by Exeter.

Vice Chair Cicero called for a vote.

Member McFadden withdrew his motion. Chair DeSack withdrew her seconded.

Superintendent Seitsinger suggested members continue this discussion on January 10, 2006 with the budget projection on table.

**District Financial Meeting – 8:pm or 7:pm – Superintendent Seitsinger reported he has received an official letter of support from the town of Exeter and a note from Senator Kevin Breene communicating that the town of West Greenwich is open to the time change. Senator Breene will bring this item to the next West Greenwich town council**

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**meeting and then issue a letter of support to the school district. Consensus of the committee was to take the necessary steps to proceed with the change once the letter of support is received for the town of West Greenwich. It is uncertain when the change will take effect.**

**2004 – 2005 Money Held Back by Exeter – This item will be carried over to the next agenda.**

**REPORTS/COMMENTS – Member McFadden requested agenda item A. Minutes – Regular Minutes of November 22, 2005 be pulled from the consent agenda, referenced agenda item Student Member Report - subject matter: food service sub committee look at meal price issue and bring to next agenda for discussion, noted this item is not on this agenda, and asked Member Maher if the sub committee will provide data relating to meal pricing at the next School Committee meeting.**

**Member Maher responded the Food Service Sub Committee and the School Health & Wellness Sub Committee are in the process of merging and the pricing issue is at the top of the topic list for discussion. He is unsure the information will be provided at the next School Committee meeting.**

**Chair DeSack asked that the sub committee notify her when they would like this item added to a School Committee agenda.**

**Clerk Coutcher requested agenda item D. Energy Fixed Price Agreement be pulled from the consent agenda.**

**Director of Administration Robert Ross referenced the enclosed Fixed Price Energy Contract memo he provided to members and gave an overview of his findings based on his meeting with representatives from Constellation New Energy and their energy audit of the district. He explained, although his memo recommends not moving forward with the Fixed Price Contract at this time, since he composed this memo, the market has moved in the district's favor. He reported Attorney Gorham has reviewed the contract and found no red flags. Mr. Ross reported he has been in contact with West Warwick Schools, as they had this same project completed in their district, and they report they are pleased with the results. He explained he is seeking the Committees' approval to enter into a long-term Energy Fixed Price contract if the market is there and informed members the Fixed Price Contract would extend to the year 2010.**

**Member McFadden recommended Mr. Ross listen to and examine the proposed lighting fixtures, as some fixtures produce a low frequency hum or may take a long time to come on.**

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**Chair DeSack recommended Mr. Ross visit a school New Energy has provided this service to. Mr. Ross confirmed he will visit West Warwick Schools.**

**Member Clay moved that Mr. Ross be authorized to enter into the Fixed Price Energy contract at a time when he deems it most advantageous to the district. Seconded by Chair DeSack. Voted 6 – 0.**

**Chair DeSack moved to accept the Regular Minutes of November 22, 2005. Seconded by Clerk Coutcher. Voted 6 – 0.**

**IMPORTANT DATES AND MEETINGS – Saturday, December 10, 2005 – 2006-2007**

**Budget Sub Committee Meeting, December 13, 2005 – Rescheduled School**

**Committee/Town Council Joint Meeting, January 6, 2005 – 1st Draft**

**Budget to**

**School Committee, January 10, 2005 – School Committee Meeting,  
January 11, 2005**

**- Special Education Budget Workshop**

**Chair DeSack reminded members the budget sub committee meeting  
on December 10, 2005 will take place in the central office, starting at  
8:00 a.m., and lasting until approximately 12:00 p.m.**

**Adjournment – Vice Chair Cicero moved to adjourn at 8:40 p.m.  
Seconded by Clerk Coutcher. Voted 6-0**

**Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.**

**ROBIN CERIO**

**CLERK**